

Military Spouse Licensing Relief Act

One Pager

The average military family moves every two to three years. For military spouses, these frequent relocations mean major disruptions in their careers. This is especially true for military spouses working in fields that require occupational licenses. Often, these spouses have to spend thousands of hours and dollars to continue their career in a new state, even though they are already licensed in another state. This burdensome red tape produces major inefficiencies and hits military families who must frequently relocate on military orders the hardest.¹

According to a recent study on military spouses in the workplace by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Hiring Our Heroes initiative, 67 percent of military spouses say that they had to quit a job because of a move in duty station.² Additionally, 50 percent of military spouses work in a field that requires licensing.³ The Department of Labor and the Department of Defense estimate that military spouse unemployment rates are three to six times the national unemployment rate.⁴

Finally, these difficulties placed on military spouses have a real impact on the military's ability to retain and recruit. More than two-thirds of military service members have reported that their spouse's career prospects influence their reenlistment decisions.⁵

Bill Summary

This bill would amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) of 2003 to require states to recognize servicemember's spouses occupational license from another state if the servicemember and the servicemember's spouse move across state lines on account of a Permanent Change of Station order. SCRA already provides a number of protections for active duty servicemembers and their families, including rental agreements, civil judicial proceedings, installment contracts, and credit card and mortgage interest rates.

This legislation would not preempt state law on how the licenses are used, as military spouses would still be required to comply with standards of practice, discipline, and continuing education requirements. Additionally, this legislation ensures that operational interstate licensure compacts would not be disrupted by the federal law.

¹ Goldwater Institute, [Breaking Down Barriers to Work](#), by Jon Riches

² U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, [Military Spouses in the Workplace](#)

³ Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University, [Military Spouse Employment Report](#)

⁴ Goldwater Institute, [Dereliction of Duty](#), by Mark Flatten

⁵ U.S. Department of Treasury and Department of Defense, [Supporting our Military Families: Best Practices for Streamlining Occupational Licensing Across State Lines](#)